

**To:** Cassell, Peter[cassell.peter@epa.gov]  
**Cc:** Kaplan, Robert[kaplan.robert@epa.gov]; Newton, Cheryl[Newton.Cheryl@epa.gov]; Kelley, Jeff[kelley.jeff@epa.gov]; Grantham, Nancy[Grantham.Nancy@epa.gov]; Benenati, Frank[benenati.frank@epa.gov]; Lee, Monica[Lee.Monica@epa.gov]; Bassler, Rachel[Bassler.Rachel@epa.gov]; Korleski, Christopher[korleski.christopher@epa.gov]; Cannon, Phillippa[Cannon.Phillippa@epa.gov]; Poy, Thomas[poy.thomas@epa.gov]; Bair, Rita[bair.rita@epa.gov]; Dennis, Allison[Dennis.Allison@epa.gov]; Loop, Travis[Loop.Travis@epa.gov]; Arcaute, Francisco[Arcaute.Francisco@epa.gov]; Deltoral, Miguel[deltoral.miguel@epa.gov]; Ballotti, Doug[ballotti.douglas@epa.gov]; Henry, Timothy[henry.timothy@epa.gov]; Donnelly, Peggy[Donnelly.Peggy@epa.gov]; Maraldo, Dean[Maraldo.Dean@epa.gov]; Fortin, Denise[Fortin.Denise@epa.gov]; Deamer, Eileen[deamer.eileen@epa.gov]  
**From:** Rowan, Anne  
**Sent:** Sat 12/10/2016 6:38:57 PM  
**Subject:** Re: Clips so far - East Chicago water

Thanks very much Peter. So far I haven't received any calls or emails from reporters. I'll let you know if that changes.

Sent from my iPhone

On Dec 10, 2016, at 12:00 PM, Cassell, Peter <[cassell.peter@epa.gov](mailto:cassell.peter@epa.gov)> wrote:

See below. Will keep monitoring. Sorry if there are formatting issues. Doing this remotely.

Pete Cassell  
Press Officer  
U.S. EPA Region 5  
312-886-6234 (office)  
312-859-9614 (cell)  
[cassell.peter@epa.gov](mailto:cassell.peter@epa.gov)

Sent from my mobile device - please pardon typos.

## East Chicago mayor: Elevated lead levels in drinking water for some homes (NWI Times)

- [Lauren Cross](http://www.nwi.com) [lauren.cross@nwi.com](mailto:lauren.cross@nwi.com), 219-933-3206
- Updated 21 min ago
- 

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- Jonathan Miano, The Times

EPA contractors clean their boots after excavating contaminated soil at a home in East Chicago's East Calumet neighborhood last summer.

• • • • •

**EAST CHICAGO — The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has discovered elevated levels of lead in drinking water in some homes in the eastern portions of the USS Lead Superfund site in the Calumet neighborhood, the federal agency confirmed Thursday night.**

**The EPA in November announced the federal agency would conduct a number of pilot programs, including the testing of drinking water at properties undergoing excavation work in zones 2 and 3 of the USS Lead Superfund site where lead and arsenic contaminants were found in the soil.**

**Preliminary data shows elevated lead levels in the water supply for a number of homes prior to the EPA's excavation work, Robert Kaplan, acting regional administrator for EPA, said Thursday night.**

**The news was first reported in a letter to the editor penned by East Chicago Mayor Anthony Copeland and published Thursday night on the city's public access channel's Facebook page. Steve Segura, director of multimedia at ECTV, confirmed Thursday night the authenticity of Mayor Anthony Copeland's letter. The EPA, according to Copeland, will start releasing this data to residents Friday.**

**In the letter, Copeland states that up to 18 of the 45 homes tested had at least one water sample that exceeded the standard of 15 parts per billion for lead in drinking water — the EPA's threshold for action.**

**Kaplan said the results are preliminary and do not indicate if there is a widespread problem. He advised concerned residents to consider using a water filter.**

**Copeland in his letter says he is asking for state and federal funding to replace all water infrastructure that may contain lead or violate water safety standards. In the letter, he accuses the EPA of "being an obstacle of progress."**

**Kaplan said the EPA provided the city with the data on Dec. 2 but said Copeland wanted to hold off the releasing of data in order to review it.**

**"We were working this week with the mayor and his staff and IDEM to agree on the most appropriate course of action," Kaplan said.**

**EPA does not fault the city for not discovering the lead in the drinking water sooner, he said.**

**"This is not a test typically conducted by a water authority. No one is faulting the water authority," Kaplan said. "IDEM is working with the city to adjust corrosion control levels."**

Copeland in the letter criticized the EPA for what he called a "new, unproven (and) unaccredited) test," and releasing the data without running it through extensive quality control procedures.

Kaplan said the testing is not new and has been used elsewhere by the EPA, such as in Flint, Michigan. It's called "sequential testing," where water is tested at various points along the city's water pipeline, he said.

This is done by collecting 15 to 20 water samples at various points along a water system. Each sample represents a length of pipe from the home to the water main.

Phone calls placed to City Attorney Carla Morgan were not returned Thursday night.

The EPA listed the entire Calumet neighborhood as part of the USS Lead Superfund site in April 2009. Local, state and federal agencies are now grappling with the city's long industrialized history with a sense of urgency following this summer's discovery of dangerously high levels of lead in the soil of the site.

Soil testing in the area began decades ago. Two lead smelter operations also once operated in the USS Lead Superfund site.

[http://www.nwitimes.com/news/crime-and-court/east-chicago-mayor-elevated-lead-levels-in-drinking-water-for/article\\_e050fa5b-64a6-5215-946c-b06d849d977d.html](http://www.nwitimes.com/news/crime-and-court/east-chicago-mayor-elevated-lead-levels-in-drinking-water-for/article_e050fa5b-64a6-5215-946c-b06d849d977d.html)

## **EPA Discovers Unsafe Levels Of Lead In East Chicago Water (Indiana public broadcasting)**

By ANNIE ROPEIK

Posted December 9, 2016

The Environmental Protection Agency has found unsafe levels of lead in the drinking water of some homes in East Chicago, Ind.

The city is already grappling with high levels of lead and arsenic found in the soil around homes inside its EPA toxic waste clean-up site, or Superfund.

That contamination came from a former smelting plant in the area. But an EPA spokesman says it's "not possible for lead from contaminated soil to get into your tap water."

Instead, he says the lead in the water likely came from city service lines or plumbing. It was found in 18 homes out of 43 inside the Superfund, tested this fall as part of an EPA pilot program. The spokesman says there are no plans to expand that program, but that the state and city are “taking action to reduce lead levels in the drinking water system.”

Still, resident Maritza Lopez is worried. The EPA is already cleaning up soil in her neighborhood. So, regardless of where the lead in the water came from, she says it’s hurtful.

“I mean, it’s our home, our memories are there, but it’s like, you don’t feel that warmth anymore,” Lopez says. “It’s like — you feel like you’ve been abused.”

In a letter posted on a city website, East Chicago mayor Anthony Copeland criticized the EPA’s testing methodology, but says he’s asking for residents to receive water filters and for funding to upgrade city infrastructure.

<http://indianapublicmedia.org/news/epa-discovers-unsafe-levels-lead-east-chicago-water-110479/>

## East Chicago lead crisis: 'Our site is parallel with Flint now' (NWI times)

- Lauren Cross and Sarah Reese, Times Staff
- Updated 30 min ago
- 

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- Jonathan Miano photos, The Times

EPA contractors excavate contaminated soil in October at a home in East Calumet, which is part of the USS Lead Superfund site in East Chicago.

• • • • •  
**EAST CHICAGO —** The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has canceled Saturday's scheduled open house for residents to discuss the USS Lead Superfund site cleanup, citing the potential lapse in federal funding beginning at midnight Saturday.

Several news outlets reported a vote on funding for the federal government was expected late Friday.

The news came just one day after the city’s mayor, Anthony Copeland, announced the EPA had informed him that lead exceeded its standard for drinking water in 18 out of 45 homes it has tested.

EPA has tested water at 43 homes, not 45, a spokesman said Friday.

**The testing was conducted in zones 2 and 3 of the USS Lead Superfund site in the Calumet neighborhood, the middle and eastern parts of the neighborhood, where high levels of lead and arsenic contaminants were found in the soil.**

**The agency has no plans to expand the testing program elsewhere in the Superfund site or the rest of the city, EPA spokesman Peter Cassell said Friday.**

**City Attorney Carla Morgan said the city does not have adequate funding to carry out further testing nor does it have the ability to duplicate the EPA's methods at this time. According to the city, this type of "sequential testing" costs about \$5,000 per household but The Times could not independently verify the costs.**

**Copeland told residents Friday he sent letters to Gov. Mike Pence and governor-elect Eric Holcomb seeking an emergency declaration because of the lead crisis in the city's Calumet neighborhood.**

**Members of a community strategy group who met with Copeland on Friday said they hope the request helps bring more resources into the city as residents deal with the fallout from living on land contaminated with lead, arsenic and other chemicals left behind by decades of industrial activity.**

**"We are just really excited that the people have won today. The people have won today," said the Rev. Cheryl Rivera, a member of the group and director of the Northwest Indiana Federation of Interfaith Organizations.**

**A Pence spokeswoman on Friday said the governor's office has received the letter and is reviewing the request, without elaborating on a timeline.**

**The EPA test results "reaffirms the need" for the entire site's drinking water to be tested as community groups have been requesting, said Debbie Chizewer, one of the attorneys at Northwestern University Pritzker Law School's Environmental Law Clinic working on behalf of residents. "Now it's even more pressing."**

#### **'Parallel with Flint now'**

**Preliminary EPA data show elevated lead levels in the water supply for a number of homes prior to the EPA's excavation work. The testing was initially carried out to see if the EPA's construction work would disturb the service lines that carry water from the mains in the street to the yards in the homes.**

**When lead, or galvanized iron, service lines are disturbed, small particles of lead can break off and get into the drinking water, according to the city.**

Like many older cities across the nation, East Chicago has a large percentage of service lines made of lead. It is likely that many homes in East Chicago have service lines that are made of, or contain, lead. Lead plumbing components in some homes could also cause increased lead levels, according to the city.

Now, The Indiana Department of Environmental Management is working with the city to adjust corrosion control levels. The treatment reduces lead leaching by forming a protective coating on the interior of the pipes, according to the city.

Thomas Frank, a member of the Duneland Environmental Justice Alliance and a board member for the Southeast Environmental Justice Task Force, said Friday the city and EPA began testing water because of residents' demands.

Frank said residents want the program extended throughout the city.

Ray Mosley, a member of the strategy group, said he felt progress is being made. He said he hoped the same resources Flint, Michigan, has received will now be made available to East Chicago.

"The lead has been found in the water," he said. "Our site is parallel with Flint now."

However, Kaplan said this week the results are preliminary and do not indicate if there is a widespread problem. He advised concerned residents to consider using a water filter like the ones distributed by the state of Michigan earlier this year in Flint.

[http://www.nwitimes.com/news/special-section/ec-lead/east-chicago-lead-crisis-our-site-is-parallel-with-flint/article\\_eb54256f-8511-54b4-913d-614fea555a53.html](http://www.nwitimes.com/news/special-section/ec-lead/east-chicago-lead-crisis-our-site-is-parallel-with-flint/article_eb54256f-8511-54b4-913d-614fea555a53.html)

## PA: Tests Show Lead in Some East Chicago Drinking Water

• By THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

EAST CHICAGO, Ind. — Dec 9, 2016, 12:30 PM ET

• • • • [Email](#)

• Environmental Protection Agency officials say the federal agency's tests have discovered elevated levels of lead in drinking water in a northwestern Indiana city where contamination already has forced some residents to move.

The EPA on Thursday confirmed the lead levels in some homes in East Chicago. Acting regional administrator Robert Kaplan told The (Northwest Indiana) Times ( <http://bit.ly/2giorF2> ) that the results are preliminary and don't indicate if there is a

widespread problem. He advised concerned residents to use a water filter.

Earlier this year, some residents of public housing were told to move because of high levels of lead and arsenic found at the complex, which is on the former site of a plant that melted lead and copper and is on the EPA's list of priority cleanup sites. The EPA said in November that it would conduct a number of pilot programs, including drinking water testing at properties at the Superfund site.

East Chicago Mayor Anthony Copeland wrote in a letter posted online and confirmed by his office that says the EPA told him 18 of the 45 homes tested had at least one water sample exceeding the standard of 15 parts per billion for lead in drinking water. Even low lead levels in children can reduce IQ, ability to pay attention and academic achievement.

In his letter, Copeland criticized the EPA for using what he called a "new, unproven (and) unaccredited test" and releasing the data without quality control procedures.

But the EPA doesn't fault the city for not knowing about the lead drinking water levels sooner, Kaplan said.

"This is not a test typically conducted by a water authority. No one is faulting the water authority," said Kaplan, adding that the testing isn't new and has been used elsewhere.

Copeland says he's asking for state and federal funding to replace all water infrastructure that may contain lead or violate water safety standards.

The dangers of lead contamination were highlighted this year by the crisis in Flint, Michigan, where old pipes leached lead into the city's drinking water beginning in 2014.

## LEAD

# **ELEVATED LEAD LEVELS FOUND IN EAST CHICAGO WATER, EPA SAYS (ABC LOCAL)**

Email

(Shutterstock)

Friday, December 09, 2016 04:40PM

CHICAGO (WLS) --

Elevated levels of lead have been discovered in the drinking water in East Chicago, Indiana, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency confirmed.

Last summer, certain East Chicago residents were told to move because of high levels of lead and arsenic.

EPA officials said the results are preliminary and don't indicate if there is a widespread problem. They advise residents to use a water filter.

<http://abc7chicago.com/news/elevated-lead-levels-found-in-east-chicago-water-epa-says-/1648558/>

## **More Bad News For Some East Chicago Residents: Lead In The Water (CBS local)**

December 9, 2016 6:06 PM

By Dorothy Tucker

**(CBS)** — High lead levels in the soil. Now, in the water.

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Resident in East Chicago can't seem to catch a break.

CBS 2's Dorothy Tucker reports.

Whether it comes from the shower or from the sink, in East Chicago the water could be contaminated with lead.

"I used to come over here and get a glass of water from the sink. Now I wonder what I have inside. I wonder if I have a lot of lead," Mauro Jimenez says.

He's among the estimated 400 residents living in the part of East Chicago where EPA officials had already determined there was lead in the soil. Now, the agency has found that 18 out of 43 homes it recently tested had lead in the water, and they are concerned there could be more.

"That is a huge, huge problem for the whole community," Jimenez says.

EPA officials insist the lead in the water is not connected to the lead in the soil. The problem with the water is how it's treated. EPA officials say East Chicago is in compliance with federal rules, but the recent tests indicate a need to make some changes to reduce the presence of lead.

The city's mayor says they're already on it.

"We proactively added a new ingredient to the treatment," Anthony Copeland says.



Because it could take months before the new treatment improves the quality of the water, the mayor says the city is looking at other ideas, too.

"We're going to look for solutions to offer and maybe assist them with matching funds for filters in the homes," Copeland says.

<http://chicago.cbslocal.com/2016/12/09/more-bad-news-for-some-east-chicago-residents-lead-in-the-water/>

## East Chicago mayor seeks disaster declaration from Pence for lead-contaminated neighborhood (Gary Post Tribe)

Akeeshea Daniels, a resident of the West Calumet Housing Complex, says Mayor Anthony Copeland's willingness to meet with East Chicago residents is encouraging as clean-up of the neighborhoods around the U.S.S. Lead Superfund site continues.

(Jim Karczewski / Post-Tribune)

**Craig Lyons**Post-Tribune

[Privacy Policy](#)

**East Chicago Mayor Anthony Copeland petitioned Indiana's top officials to declare the lead-contaminated Calumet neighborhood a disaster.**

**Copeland's decision to seek declaration from Gov. [Mike Pence](#) was announced after a two-hour meeting with residents Friday. The residents of the Calumet neighborhood demanded the mayor seek disaster declaration for the area around the U.S.S. Lead Superfund site.**

**"That will allow the city to access resources that are needed," said the Rev. Cheryl Rivera, a member of the East Chicago Community Strategy Group and director of the Northwest Indiana Federation of Interfaith Organizations. "We are just very excited that the people have won today."**

**East Chicago officials learned from the EPA the extent of contamination at the West Calumet Housing Complex in May and then decided to evacuate the more than 1,000 residents of the public housing complex.**

**As residents began to move out of West Calumet, those living in the eastern parts of the U.S.S. Lead Superfund site began to learn of the contaminants in the soil around their homes. The EPA began remediation work in those neighborhoods during the fall.**

**"The residents of my city, my staff, other local officials and I have been laboring under conditions which are not of our making, but which cry out for help," Copeland wrote to Pence on Dec. 1.**

#### **ADVERTISING**

**Copeland noted, in the letter, that Indiana code defined a disaster as "being an occurrence or imminent threat of widespread severe damage, injury, loss of life or property damage from a utility failure, public health emergency, blight or other public calamity."**

**East Chicago resident Martiza Lopez said residents must continue to press officials to take action in the neighborhoods around the U.S.S. Lead Superfund site. (Jim Karczewski / Post-Tribune)**

**The resources of East Chicago are strained to the "point of breaking," Copeland wrote, and resources from the state are needed to adequately respond to the continuing crisis.**

**"I am sure that as governor, you do not find it acceptable that Hoosier children be exposed to toxins, or suffer the lifelong burdens which are known to result from such exposure," Copeland wrote. "I am sure that you do not find it acceptable that these children's families suffer the long-term economic devastation of blight caused by environmental problems which these hard working Hoosier families did not cause.**

**"By this letter, I am imploring you to take action," Copeland wrote.**

**Pence's office said the request was received and is being reviewed.**

**The mayor again met with residents Friday to continue to address their concerns and needs. West Calumet Housing Complex resident Akeeshea Daniels said she's hopeful that the city will continue working with residents.**

#### **At lead-tainted Indiana housing complex, inaction and missed warnings**

**"It was very productive," said Maritza Lopez, who lives in the adjacent East Calumet neighborhood, and that residents know they must continue pushing for action.**

**Daniels said residents will keep going step by step.**

**The revelation of Copeland's disaster declaration request came a day after the mayor said the EPA informed the city that concentration of lead in the water in the Calumet neighborhood exceeded acceptable levels.**

**The EPA monitored water quality of the eastern zones of the U.S.S. Lead Superfund site during remediation work in the neighborhood, according to the mayor's announcement, and found that 18 of the 45 homes where the water was tested exceeded 15 parts per billion of lead – the EPA's threshold for water safety.**

Copeland said, in the announcement, the city's water supply meets all state and federal quality standards and the EPA used a pilot program to test quality that had the agency had not used.

"Why did the EPA use a new, unproven, unaccredited test in the middle of the U.S.S. Lead Superfund crisis? Why is the EPA now released data which has not gone through its QAQC (quality assurance, quality control) process," the mayor wrote. "This does not surprise me, because this is the same EPA which hid soil sample results from the City of East Chicago and its residents for two years and more."

Copeland said residents would begin hearing results of the EPA water testing Friday.

The EPA told the city that a single water filter for kitchen taps is enough to meet residents' needs. Copeland said that is not adequate and the agency should supply a more thorough filtration system for residents.

The more thorough system would both address lead that leached into service lines and prevent additional exposure to toxins, Copeland said.

EPA officials did not respond to a request for comment Friday.

Late Friday, a planned EPA forum for residents scheduled for Saturday at Carrie Gosch School was canceled.

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<http://www.chicagotribune.com/suburbs/post-tribune/news/ct-ptb-east-chicago-residents-mayor-st-1210-20161209-story.html>

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NEXT UP

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BREAKING EDITOR'S PICK URGENT

## EPA cancels East Chicago meeting, cites government shutdown (NWI Times)

- [Lauren Cross lauren.cross@nwi.com, 219-933-3206](mailto:lauren.cross@nwi.com)
- Updated 40 min ago
- 

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- The Times

Parents are being urged to get their children tested for lead.

• • • • •  
**EAST CHICAGO – The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has cancelled Saturday's scheduled open house in East Chicago to discuss the USS Lead Superfund cleanup, citing the possible lapse in federal funding beginning at midnight.**

**It is necessary for EPA to cancel the open house now to ensure that community members and others receive as much advance notice as possible, EPA said in a statement.**

**"With a possible lapse of funding, it would be unlawful for federal employees to work on this type of activity," the release states.**

**EPA will reschedule the event for a later date. The agency regrets any inconvenience the cancellation may cause.**

**The open house/public meeting was scheduled to run from 1 to 4 p.m. on Saturday, Dec. 10, at the cafetorium at Carrie Gosch Elementary School at 455 E. 148th Street in East Chicago.**

**[http://www.nwitimes.com/news/local/lake/epa-cancels-east-chicago-meeting-cites-government-shutdown/article\\_a1fa8bc9-db8a-518e-81dc-9cea717b6094.html](http://www.nwitimes.com/news/local/lake/epa-cancels-east-chicago-meeting-cites-government-shutdown/article_a1fa8bc9-db8a-518e-81dc-9cea717b6094.html)**